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RUEHUJA/AMEMBASSY ABUJA 8378
RUEHWR/AMEMBASSY WARSAW 0166
RUEHCD/AMCONSUL CIUDAD JUAREZ 0146
RUEHIT/AMCONSUL ISTANBUL 0147
RUEHSO/AMCONSUL SAO PAULO 0162
RULSDMK/DEPT OF TRANSPORTATION WASHDC
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC
RUCPDOG/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC
RUEAHLG/DEPT OF HOMELAND SECURITY WASHDC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC
RHEBAAA/DEPT OF ENERGY WASHINGTON DC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC
RUFOADA/JAC MOLESWORTH AFB UK
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 LAGOS 000142

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STATE FOR AF/W
STATE FOR INR/AA
WARSAW FOR LISA PIASCIK
CIUDAD JUAREZ FOR DONNA BLAIR
ISTANBUL FOR TASHAWNA SMITH
SAO PAULO FOR ANDREW WITHERSPOON

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KDEM](#) [NI](#)
SUBJECT: PDP LEGACY CAMPAIGN: TARGET GRASSROOTS & NEW
GENERATION

LAGOS 00000142 001.2 OF 002

Classified By: Consul General Brian L. Browne for reasons 1.4 (B) and (D)

11. (C) Summary: According to Francis Sheen, Director of Communications for the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) 2007 Presidential Legacy Campaign to be launched in late February, the PDP faces challenges by Igbos from within the party, "bluebloods" outside the party, and former party members who defected to the Action Congress (AC) with their political and campaign machinery. In response to these challenges, PDP will launch a grass-roots campaign, including candidate debates in March, to attract support from both traditional rulers and younger generations. Rivers Governor Peter Odili has contributed his campaign machinery to the Legacy Campaign. According to Sheen, Delta Governor James Ibori has fallen from grace and is likely to be arrested when he leaves the Governorship. End Summary.

YAR'ADUA AND JONATHAN CHALLENGED ON THREE FRONTS

12. (C) Francis Sheen told Poloff on February 6 he will be the Director of Communications for the People's Democratic Party (PDP) Presidential Legacy Campaign for Katsina Governor Umaru Yar'Adua and running mate Bayelsa Governor Goodluck Jonathan. Yar'Adua and Jonathan will merge their campaigns in late February under the Legacy slogan and campaign across the nation together. Sheen was confident Yar'Adua and Jonathan would win, but highlighted current challenges. PDP Igbo governors believe Jonathan and the Ijaws have taken the Igbos' turn to go to Abuja and are "giving us a lot of trouble," Sheen said.

13. (C) A second challenge is the fact that neither Yar'Adua

nor Jonathan have long-standing national political reputations, as does All Nigeria People's Party (ANPP) presidential candidate Muhammadu Buhari. However, Sheen said a focused attack on Buhari's dictatorial past, slated to begin in February, will quell this issue.

¶4. (C) Sheen bemoaned the exit of many PDP founders to the Action Congress (AC) which has given the PDP "a lot of headaches" and has created a strong opposition which neither Yar'Adua nor Jonathan are sufficiently politically seasoned to dismantle. The PDP's "master vote riggers" have defected to the AC, Sheen said, and the PDP will contest any rigging it perceives. President Obasanjo should not "quarrel with anyone" in the next ninety days, Sheen said, because this would reflect negatively on Yar'Adua and Jonathan. Sheen said he wished Obasanjo could be asked to distance himself from the Legacy Campaign, but lamented that such a move would be impossible. (Comment: The remark about Obasanjo not "quarreling" is interesting. President Obasanjo has gotten particularly rebarbative as the election date approaches, verbally sparring with all and sundry, even people within his own camp. As Sheen suggests, this has increased the political temperature while also generating bad will for Obasanjo's candidates. End Comment.)

LEGACY CAMPAIGN: TARGET GRASS ROOTS AND NEW GENERATION

¶5. (C) Sheen forecasts the AC and ANPP will attract large numbers of would-be PDP votes. To counter this, Sheen said the Legacy Campaign will hold grass roots rallies. It will also highlight the role of traditional kings, while simultaneously seeking the support of younger generations. The campaign will be issue-based. In March, the NGO Concerned Professionals will sponsor debates between

LAGOS 00000142 002.2 OF 002

political parties. The campaign will also court the Nigerian diaspora's five million votes in the U.S. by visiting the Congressional Black Caucus and by asking Nigerians to vote at the Nigerian Embassy and Consulates. (Comment: The statement that the campaign will be issues-based was either so naive or disingenuous that it jars. Thus far, the campaign has been long on invectives and short on substantive insight. By all indications, it will stick to this woeful cause. End Comment.)

¶6. (C) Governor Odili of Rivers State, who coveted Jonathan's PDP vice presidential position, early in February turned over his campaign machinery to the Legacy Campaign. Odili's gesture implies he has bowed to the national PDP's choice of Yar'Adua and Jonathan and is no longer a "security threat." Governor Ibori of Delta State, on the other hand, is in trouble, Sheen said. Ibori will say he has donated naira 1.5 billion (approximately USD 11.5 million) to the Legacy Campaign. However, that will not save him, Sheen opined. Ibori will be arrested as soon as he leaves the governorship and loses immunity, Sheen said. Ibori is in poor favor and "will pay dearly" for theft of state government funds and for allowing others to steal, Sheen warned.

COMMENT

¶7. (C) Comment: Sheen's concerns highlight Yar'Adua and Jonathan's weaknesses. Sheen's cryptic comment about the defection of key PDP elements, namely "master vote riggers" may reflect fear that the vaunted PDP election machinery may not work as well in 2007 as in 2003. End Comment.
BROWNE